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May 7, 2003

Examiner Nathan M. Nutter
United States Patent and Trademark Office,
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,
Washington D.C. 20231

MAY 08 2003

Subject: Patent Application USSN: 09/831,688
Title: Water Compatible Energy Curable Compositions Containing Maleimide Derivatives
Date Filed: July 23 2001
Attorney Docket #: C-463

Dear Examiner Nutter:

I write regarding your telephone message of April 14th concerning Applicants' right to an Interview After Final pursuant to MPEP Section 713.09.

The purpose of the interview, in this case, would be to discuss proposed changes to Applicants' application, which would overcome the rejections lodged under 35 USC Section 112, First Paragraph. More specifically, we will address use of the phrases:

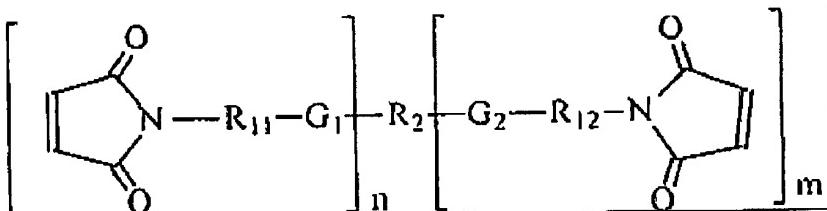
- (a) "water compatible compound" and
- (b) "a compound copolymerizable with the said maleimide derivative"

in Applicants' claims.

We anticipate that the content of the interview will involve a discussion of the following amended Claim 7, which Applicants now propose as the broadest claim:

7. (Proposed) An active single phase water compatible actinic radiation curable composition comprising a water compatible non-emulsion, non-dispersion compound; water; and a maleimide derivative of the formula:

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wherein n and m each independently represent an integer of 1 to 5, and the total of m and n is 6 or smaller;

R₁₁ and R₁₂ each independently represent a linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, an alicyclic group, an arylalkylene group, and a cycloalkylalkylene group;

G₁ and G₂ each represent an ester linkage selected from the group consisting of -COO- and -OCO-;

and R₂ represents a linking chain having an average molecular weight of 100 to 100,000 selected from the group consisting of a (poly)ether or (poly)ester linking chain, in which at least one organic group consists of a group or groups selected from a straight or branched chain alkylene group, an alkylene group having a hydroxyl group, an alicyclic group, an aryl group, an arylalkylene group, and a cycloalkylalkylene group connected via at least one linkage selected from the group consisting of an ether or ester linkage.

Applicants believe that the proposed claim clarifies the definition of Applicants' "water compatible compound" as a compound which is water dilutable/water-soluble by introduction the limitations "non-emulsion" and "non-dispersion" into the claim. Also, as noted by you, the meaning of the phrase "water compatible compound" shall be further clarified by deleting the word "resin" on page 41, line 11, of Applicants' specification to bring it in accordance with amended Claim 7.

Applicants also propose canceling Claims 1 through 6 to further clarify that the "maleimide derivative" is of the specific formula shown in amended Claim 7.

Therefore, given the very specific nature of the maleimide derivative, a person of ordinary skill in the art would certainly know or which be able to determine, without the burden of any undue experimentation, which compounds would copolymerize with the maleimide derivative.

While the proposed amendments introduce new limitations to Claim 7, Applicants respectfully submit that the limitations do not require more than a nominal search and do not necessitate a new search.

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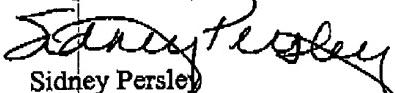
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Should Applicants be granted an interview, Applicants also plan to discuss how amended Claim 7 is not anticipated by the prior art references of McGinniss et al., Roth et al., Wilson Jr. et al, or Kishino et al. in light of the amendments made to claim 7.

Finally, Applicants would like to thank you in advance for considering their interview request and ask that you please inform them whether an Interview After Final will be granted. Applicants ask to be promptly notified of such decision by telephone, email or fax in order to arrange a mutually convenient date and time for an interview.

Respectfully submitted,


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